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ABSTRACT

The report is organized into three sections. Section 1, "Attendance and Organization of Work," is a general summary giving information on place and date, attendance, election of officers, agenda, organization of work, the opening meeting, the Report of the Meeting, and the closing meeting. Section 2, "Account of Proceedings: The Situation and Prospects of Youth in Latin American and the Caribbean," includes statements by the Secretariat and statements of countries and agencies. Section 3 discusses the "Adoption of the Regional Plan of Action for the International Youth Year." Four appendices are also included: a list of participants; a list of documents; a paper entitled "Declaration by 35 non-governmental organizations represented at the Latin American Forum on Youth Participation"; and a list of the general considerations of the working groups. (TRS)

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Economic Commission for Latin America

REPORT OF THE LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR

(San José, Costa Rica, 3-7 October 1983)

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/I. ATTENDANCE

I. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. Place and date

1. The Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Youth Year was convened by the Executive Secretary of ECLA and the Secretariat of the International Youth Year, which is under the authority of the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, to provide the countries of the region with the opportunity to participate effectively in preparations for the International Youth Year, in accordance with the Specific Programme of Measures and Activities, and was held in San José, Costa Rica, from 3 to 7 October 1983.

2. Attendance */

2. The Meeting was attended by representatives of the following Member States of the Commission: Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Spain, the United States, Uruguay and Venezuela.

3. Representatives of the Netherlands Antilles, an Associate Member State, were also present.

4. Representatives of the following Member States of the United Nations attended the Meeting as observers: Romania and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

5. The Secretariat of the United Nations was represented by the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (CSDHA).

6. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies attended the Meeting: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders (ILANUD), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations University (UNU).

7. The United Nations Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year was also represented.

8. The following specialized agencies of the United Nations were represented at the Meeting: International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization/Pan-American Health Organization (WHO/PAHO).

9. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations also attended: Latin American and Caribbean Youth Centre (CLACJ), Commonwealth Youth Programme, Inter-American Institute for Agricultural Co-operation (IICA), Board of the Cartagena Agreement (JUNAC), Organization of American States (OAS), Inter-American Children's Institute (IACI).

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*/ See the list of participants included in annex 1.

/10. Representatives

10. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations also attended the Meeting: International Social Security Association (AISS), World Confederation of Labour (WCL), Latin American Confederation of Workers (CLAT), International Council of Women (ICW), Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), International Federation of Business and Professional Women (IFBPW), World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), World Federation of United Nations Associations, World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), League of Red Cross Societies, Cruz Roja de Costa Rica, International Youth and Student Movement for the United Nations, Movimiento Internacional de Jóvenes y Estudiantes Pro Naciones Unidas de Costa Rica, Movimiento Internacional de Jóvenes y Estudiantes Pro Naciones Unidas de Panamá, Comité Juvenil de Derechos Humanos de Chile, AFS/International/Intercultural Programs, Inc., World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations, Confederación Latinoamericana de Asociaciones Cristianas de Jóvenes, Asociación Cristiana de Jóvenes de Chile, Asociación Cristiana de Jóvenes de Costa Rica, Asociación Cristiana de Jóvenes de Panamá, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, Asociación Nacional de Muchachas Guías de Panamá, Asociación Nacional de Muchachas Guías y Muchachas Scouts de Costa Rica, Catholic Relief Services, Caritas Internationalis, Friends World Committee for Consultation, Los Amigos (Cuáqueros) de San José, Co-operative for American Relief Everywhere, Inc. (CARE), World Student Christian Federation, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Women's International Zionist Organization, World Organization of the Scout Movement (World Boy Scouts Office), International Social Service, World University Service, International Union for Child Welfare, Zonta International, Federation of National Committees of the International Christian Youth Exchange, International Union of Students, Centro Interamericano de Investigación sobre Juventud (CINIJUVE), National Non-Governmental Committee for the International Youth Year, Consejo Asesor Iberoamericano para la Juventud Rural, Federation of Volunteer Organizations, Fundación Acción Ya, Juventud Social Cristiana, Partido Unidad, Costa Rica, Juventud Vanguardista Costarricense, Movimiento de la Juventud Panameña, Latin American Continental Students Organization (OCLAE), Organización Turística Estudiantil y Juvenil Costarricense (OTEC), and the United States Youth Council.

3. Election of Officers

11. The Meeting elected as its Officers the representatives of the following countries:

Chairman:	Costa Rica
Vice-Chairmen:	Dominican Republic
	Jamaica
	Venezuela
Rapporteur:	Argentina

/4. Agenda

4. Agenda */

12. At its first plenary session the Meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Election of Officers

2. Adoption of the agenda

3. The situation and prospects of youth in Latin America and the Caribbean

   a) Youth and development: The situation and needs of youth in the region
   b) Youth as a social movement: The State, civil society and culture
   c) National programmes and policies for youth

4. Regional Plan of Action for the International Youth Year

5. Consideration and adoption of the final report.

5. Organization of work

13. During the first two days, plenary sessions were held in which the countries and organizations made statements on agenda item 3 concerning the situation and prospects of youth in Latin America and the Caribbean. On the following two days, working groups were formed to examine the Draft Regional Plan of Action for Latin America and the Caribbean for the International Youth Year (agenda item 4).

6. Opening meeting

14. Speakers at the opening meeting included Mr. Quentin West, Acting Director-General of IICA; Mr. Hernán González Gutiérrez, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports of Costa Rica; Mr. Enrique V. Iglesias, Executive Secretary of ECLA; Mr. Mohammed Shariff, Executive Secretary of the International Youth Year; Mr. Nicu Ceaucescu, Chairman of the United Nations Advisory Committee for the International Youth Year, and the First Vice-President and Acting President of the Republic of Costa Rica, Mr. Alberto Fait.

15. At the beginning of the meeting, the Acting Director-General of IICA noted the importance of the subject of youth at a time of social, economic and political crisis in the world, and pointed out that, despite the efforts made in the region to eliminate poverty, a high percentage of its young people still lived under marginal conditions and faced a lack of opportunities for the future. He stressed IICA's efforts since its establishment to contribute to the participation of rural youth in regional development, and particularly noted that young people in rural areas constituted a very hopeful element for change and had been among those least benefited by development policies, which had mainly been aimed at the urban sectors. In that respect, he stressed the Institute's deep interest in the results of the

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*/ See the list of documents included in annex 2.

/Meeting. He

Meeting. He concluded by extending a cordial welcome to all the participants and by wishing them success in their endeavours.

16. The Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports of Costa Rica thanked the delegates for participating in the Meeting and stated that his country's enthusiasm and best efforts had gone into holding it, since it represented Costa Rica's commitment to the young people of the entire American hemisphere within the context of the guiding principles of the International Youth Year: Participation, Development and Peace. He then mentioned his view of culture as an essential part of man's life and defined it as the ethics and quality with which man handled his life. He noted that culture was inseparable from freedom in Costa Rica and that it was the path youth followed towards maturity. He urged youth to seek understanding among mankind and to renew the search for higher forms of peaceful coexistence in order to build a freer and juster world on the structures of the past in the never-ending quest for human happiness.

17. The Executive Secretary of ECLA began his address by thanking the Government of Costa Rica for its enthusiastic and effective collaboration in the organization of the Conference and made special reference to the manner in which the ideals of the United Nations were linked with Costa Rica. After thanking both IICA and the United Nations officials in charge of the International Youth Year: Participation, Development and Peace for their co-operation, he stressed the exceptional work performed in that area by non-governmental organizations and especially by the Latin American Young Men's Christian Association, whose work had significantly enhanced the scope of the Meeting.

18. He noted that the United Nations' interest in youth and the proclamation of 1985 as the International Youth Year fell within the context of the principal efforts made by the United Nations over the past 20 years in relation to mankind's great common issues, which included women, population, the environment and disadvantaged or weak social groups. He indicated that preparatory efforts such as those being made at the present Meeting were intended to arouse mankind's critical awareness of such issues and to sensitize public opinion with a view to future actions.

19. He declared his conviction that Latin America and the Caribbean must respond dynamically and vigorously to the summons made in relation to the International Youth Year, for three main reasons. The first was that the region was a young one; in that respect, he emphasized the importance of youth in all fields and, above all, the impressive challenge posed by the need to incorporate young people into the work force. Secondly, he pointed out that youth was not only the repository of the values of society and civilization, but was also the crucible of new social values, of mankind's major idealistic movements centering on peace, freedom and democracy, and of great utopias; in that respect, he reaffirmed the rights of youth to aspire to and design those utopias. Finally, he emphasized that youth was presenting a dramatic challenge with regard to the building of a new society and the establishment of new economic and social structures under the current circumstances of economic crisis, recession and violent change, which made the establishment of new and equitable forms of development imperative. Under those circumstances, young people should realize that all must participate in the

/new society

new society and, in this year of Bolívar, bear the Latin American ideal firmly in mind as a great challenge for future action.

20. He pointed out the encouraging concern of the Latin American and Caribbean governments in that regard, which was demonstrated by the existence of Youth Ministries and Secretariats. Finally, he referred to the importance of establishing a programme of action in that area so as to sensitize public opinion in that regard, guide future actions and give youth the opportunity to assume an active and participatory role in the programme, to which end he pledged the efforts of ECLA.

21. The Executive Secretary of the International Youth Year emphasized the creative and innovative potential of the activities associated with IYY and also stressed the interest of young people in participating fully in the processes that affected them from the planning stage onwards, rather than when decisions had already been made.

22. He then referred to the establishment in Vienna of the International Youth Year Secretariat, which would serve as a focal point for world co-operation to benefit youth. He also emphasized the importance of the committed efforts of non-governmental organizations, which served as channels of communication with youth; in that respect he especially stressed the work of the Young Men's Christian Association.

23. He declared that world concern regarding the subject of youth would be expressed in several stages: the first, prior to 1985, would be devoted to the establishment of policies and mechanisms at the national level; the second would be the 1985 International Youth Year, in which the advances made in the action plans would be evaluated; and the third stage, subsequent to that year, would include long-term commitments to achieve real progress in their implementation.

24. He praised the efforts made by Latin American and Caribbean countries on behalf of youth and pointed out that there was still much to be done in that field. He asked the delegates to publicize the objectives of IYY in order to stimulate Latin American participation in its activities.

25. After thanking the host country and ECLA for their work on behalf of youth, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee for IYY wished the Conference every success and emphasized the importance that had been placed on the subject in the various forums of the United Nations. He particularly stressed the need to take into account youth's capacity for participation and its legitimate desire to become directly involved in the issues that affected young people. He then referred to the interest shown by the majority of Latin American and Caribbean countries in the IYY initiative and stressed the importance of the regional preparatory meeting, the results of which would greatly influence the global action plan for youth which would be adopted in 1985.

26. He also referred to the need to establish mechanisms and possibilities for pursuing the study of youth matters within the framework of the United Nations, and mentioned, among other things, the convening of a world conference, the

/establishment of

establishment of a United Nations body to co-ordinate all activities in that field, and the establishment of an international centre for documentation and research on youth.

27. The Acting President of the Republic of Costa Rica referred to the importance of youth's contribution to the joint task of achieving a healthier, more fraternal and solidary world. In that respect, he mentioned the ideals of youth and stated that the latter contributed an overall meaning that overrode individualistic approaches and divided thinking and contributed to understanding and brotherhood among peoples and to delving more deeply into the human soul, an aspect that had been neglected in a world which, despite its impressive technological advances, had failed to make similar progress in rationality.

28. He noted that the International Youth Year afforded an opportunity to put youth in the forefront of change, and said that it was young people themselves, rather than governments or academics, who should set new courses and take their place in the vanguard of the process of change.

29. Finally, he declared the Conference formally opened, calling on the youth of the world to unite in inducing governments and regional alliances to abandon policies based on hegemony, imposition and domination and to adopt others tending to promote integrated overall development that would contribute to peace and understanding among mankind.

7. Report of the Meeting

30. The Rapporteur, after thanking the Government of Costa Rica, the delegations present and the ECLA Secretariat, explained the organization of the draft report presented (DSC/4), and pointed out that it was as complete an advance version as possible of the text which would be sent to participants by the ECLA Secretariat from Santiago. In that connection she noted that the participating countries would have a period of 45 days to submit their observations on the text to the Secretariat.

31. Finally, she drew attention to some of the more outstanding paragraphs of the report, which reflected the fundamental aspects of the discussion.

8. Closing meeting

32. At the closing meeting, the representative of Jamaica spoke on behalf of the delegations present. After thanking the Government of Costa Rica, ECLA and the IICA, he emphasized the usefulness of the Meeting's discussions in strengthening relations between the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and laying the bases for solving the problems affecting youth, thus improving the conditions of the societies of the region, both in the present and the future.

/33. Mr.

33. Mr. Gonzalo Martner, representing the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, thanked the Officers of the Meeting, the Government of Costa Rica, the delegations present, IICA and ECLA. He congratulated ECLA and the governments on the adoption of the Regional Plan of Action and indicated that the Plan constituted a suitable regional strategy; he also expressed hope that all the countries would have a national strategy on the subject by 1985. Finally, he stated that he was confident that Latin America and the Caribbean would be in the vanguard with respect to the subject of youth, in the spirit of co-operation initiated in the Meeting.

34. The Director of the Social Development Division, on behalf of the Executive Secretary of ECLA, thanked all those who had made the Meeting possible, especially the Government of Costa Rica, the President and Vice-President and the Rapporteur. He went on to stress the innovative role played by youth in society, especially at a crucial time such as the present, when the prevailing crisis emphasized the need for building a new society. He stressed the importance of the Plan of Action adopted, which established lines of action and indicated that it was incumbent on governments to implement it; in that connection, he mentioned the role to be played by the national committees for the International Youth Year, which already existed in many of the countries, and the need for adequate preparation for the participation of youth in society. He also referred to the positive contributions to the Meeting made by the bodies of the United Nations system and by the non-governmental organizations: especially the collaboration of the Young Men's Christian Association. In conclusion, he stated that the theme of youth made it possible to combine the ideas of participation, development and peace within a democratic framework.

35. The Director of the IICA thanked the delegations and ECLA for their participation in the Meeting and stressed the importance of the topics under consideration.

36. The Meeting was closed by the Chairman, Mr. Hernán González G., Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports of Costa Rica. After the customary courtesies, he referred to the features of Costa Rican history which had enabled the country to survive as a free and unarmed country where military institutions had been eliminated from political consciousness and budgetary allocations, to the benefit of education and culture and the building of a society which respected citizens' rights.

37. He stressed the need for a commitment to youth, whose problems should be considered in the framework of the integral development of society, which could be attained only through peace and participation. He called for recognition of the important role played by youth with regard to the creation of new values and social schemes, and stressed the need for recognizing the right of youth to education and work. Finally, he expressed his country's firm will to form, on the basis of its inherited political system, a fairer, freer and more peaceful society, and declared the Meeting closed.

/II. ACCOUNT

II. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS: THE SITUATION AND PROSPECTS OF YOUTH IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (AGENDA ITEM 3)

1. Statements by the Secretariat

38. In opening the discussions on agenda item 3, the Director of the Social Development Division of ECLA gave some clarifications on the general criteria applied in the preparation of the document "Situation and prospects of youth in Latin America and the Caribbean" (E/CEPAL/Conf.75/L.2). In that context, he noted the complexity involved in arriving at a definition of youth in social and biological terms or according to memberships in specific social groups in the countries. He underlined the importance of that theme in connection with the constant renewal of society and as a pivotal point in considerations regarding its future, particularly in view of the crisis faced by the region. From a long-term standpoint, overcoming the crisis involved the consideration of new options for social organization, which would require including youth in the study and formulation of different types of projects. In view of the uncertainty of the future, accentuated by scientific changes and their unforeseeable rates of evolution, and bearing in mind the role that youth had traditionally played in the processes of change in the region, he stressed that it was essential to set effective integration processes in motion and to create spaces for participation that would be sufficiently flexible to accomodate the questioning concerns of youth. He pointed out that young people had in the past been social actors whose efforts had promoted changes in society and not only claimed space for youth; that role could again be of importance in view of the social effects of the existing economic crisis, which had heightened the uncertainty of the future, in relation to a certain breakdown in confidence in the ideals that actively sustained different types of societies. He pointed out that far-reaching structural changes (urbanization, education and modern industrial and tertiary jobs) had widened the cultural gap between generations, facilitated socialization among peers and encouraged cultural expressions of an isolationist nature.

39. He then commented on the document prepared by the Secretariat on the subject, stressing the demographic aspects and their meaning and the participation of youth in the working world, with special emphasis on work performed by women. He analysed the problems of unemployment and underemployment, which were especially critical among youth, and referred to educational change, stressing its role in cultural training and in forming citizens, as well as its importance to job training and significance in creative and innovative activities. Special attention was given to the subject of youth in marginal situations and the creation of circuits that perpetuate such marginalization. In that regard, he noted that despite highly significant changes in social structures and considerable economic growth, some important social groups were still excluded from the benefits stemming from such progress, rural and marginal urban groups being outstanding examples of this. Young people in those groups lacked the education essential for entering and participating in the job market, where they could only perform non-formal tasks at low incomes and with no prospects for social mobility.

/40. Finally,

40. Finally, he referred to the need to deal with youth-related problems within an integrated and overall context of development, which would require a repostulation of the forms society should take. He stressed the need to expand the scope of sectoral planning and to promote the participation of young people as both actors and objects of social policies, which should more than ever take into account the uncertainty and constraints on creativity that continued to limit their insertion.

41. The Director of the United Nations Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs pointed out that the subject of youth should be considered as a problem of integrated development and that the participation of youth should be viewed in terms of such development and its related decision-making mechanisms. Where youth and the future were concerned, he stressed four serious problems that affected young people in Latin America: a) the extremely large foreign debt which the youth of today would have to pay in coming years, and which would also imply a sharp restriction of the equipment imports necessary for development; b) the region's high rate of population growth, which pointed to a considerable rise in population size by the end of the century; c) changes in the social roles of different groups, which would make it unlikely that certain relatively organic processes which had guided development in the past could go on doing so in the future; and d) the consequently greater difficulties in preserving peace, both internally and with other countries. In that respect, he noted the need for a careful study to be made of the causes of wars and the factors contributing to the stockpiling of arms.

42. The crisis in the historical pattern of development posed a great theoretical challenge which must be confronted with humility. The role of the State, of communities and of social groups would have to be reconsidered, with a view to overcoming parochialism and discarding narrow outlooks in order to pursue a more universal approach. Latin America had to find a way out of the crisis that had led to negative growth rates and determine options for the future on the basis of three main points: a) intensive democratization in order to incorporate more and more sectors into the decision-making process; b) self-sufficient development involving endogenous modernization, with extensive co-operation between industry and agriculture; and c) subregional and regional integration, not only in the sphere of trade, as had so far been the case, but also on a much more profound and comprehensive plane. Youth, in its ongoing process of internationalization, should gather the best cultural, technological and other elements from other continents in order to attain development, but should also preserve its own identity.

2. Statements of countries and agencies

43. The general statements presented by the delegations dealt with a number of subjects, including in the first place those linked to the slogan of the International Youth Year: Participation, Development and Peace. In this sense, a comment made during the discussions, to the effect that there could be no peace without development and no development without participation, is worthy of being recalled.

/44. Several

44. Several statements were based on the premise that the problems of youth were closely linked to those of the societies to which that youth belonged and that the problems of youth were therefore closely linked to the problems of development. Numerous delegations pointed out that young people were those most affected by the situation of underdevelopment and by the general worsening of economic and social conditions caused by the recent world crisis. It was also noted that the potential for participation by youth depended to a great extent on the degree of development reached by societies.

45. Several delegations pointed out the incompatibility of current development models with the full participation and integration of youth into the life of the countries. In that regard, they indicated that the IYY goals should include youth participation in activities tending to achieve more balanced social and economic development.

46. Some delegations stated their conviction that the current crisis could become an opportunity for renovating the society and economy of the countries and indicated that youth should play an important role in contributing ideas and performing tasks aimed at that renewal.

47. In close connection with the theme of development, all the delegations, while stressing the indispensable contribution of youth to social tasks, emphasized the need for the wide-ranging participation of young people at every level of activity in the countries. In that context, and in accordance with the diverse national realities, it was pointed out that democratic forms of co-existence favoured the participation of youth, and some aspects of that participation in the region were analysed.

48. Several delegations referred to the current processes of democratic opening that were under way in their countries and noted their hope that these would lead to a renewed participation of youth through the revitalizing of political parties. Other delegations, on the other hand, pointed out that even within traditional frameworks of democracy, the participation of youth in institutional activities was noticeably diminishing in their countries; in that respect, it was remarked that that fact did not signify passivity, but rather a certain estrangement from current forms of participation which young people might consider somewhat ineffective for attaining the objectives of progress and social justice. One delegation noted that that situation was not causing rebellious attitudes, as in previous decades, but was being channelled through certain existing institutions; as a new nuance, it observed that in the sphere of commitment and social solidarity, youth was seeking a more autonomous role in established institutions and was showing marked resistance to the possibility of being manipulated.

49. Other delegations pointed out that young people were pressuring for greater social, political, job and educational participation and stressed the potential for frustration and rebelliousness that was produced in societies when such aspirations were not fulfilled. It was evident that the possibility of access to suitable channels of participation for youth led to a reduction of social tensions and of the generation gap, and to increased support for common objectives of progress and well-being, thereby providing an appropriate channel for the

positive contributions that youth could make. In that respect, a number of delegations stressed the importance of youth organizations and movements, and the willingness of their governments to encourage them as elements of integration into society. Some delegations referred to the establishment of middle-level social associations and organizations -labour unions, ethnic community groups, etc.- with significant youth participation. In that respect, it was noted that the level of youth participation in many Latin American countries was very low, especially in unions, as one delegation observed, and that led to a need to establish policies aimed at achieving a fuller integration of young people, particularly those in marginal and rural groups, into participatory tasks. One delegation mentioned, in that regard, that in the last twenty-five years youth had been the most important force of change and had gradually formed a social movement that had kept pace with the development of Latin American societies: increasing social and economic progress had permitted the formulation of the concept of youth, moving away from the abrupt jump that took place from childhood to the full adult state in societies of lesser relative development.

50. In relation to youth participation, the statements by country representatives also made reference to different problems that hindered the participation of young people and their full integration into national life, which will be covered in a subsequent portion of this account.

51. In regard to peace, the third element of the IYY slogan, some delegations stressed the role that youth could play in this area in a world increasingly afflicted by the upheaval caused by the arms race. They noted that youth was actively participating in peace and disarmament initiatives, as well as in movements linked to the preservation of the common heritage of mankind, as in the case of the environment. Youth's special vocation for the cause of peace and the general welfare of all people was stressed in relation to the need to prevent situations that could constitute future threats.

52. One delegation stated that Latin American youth was supporting the initiatives aimed at peace, negotiation and non-intervention promoted by the Contadora Group, inasmuch as the objective of those initiatives was to defend youth and children, who would be the main victims in case of an outbreak of violence in the region. The advisability of taking all possible steps to prevent the presence of nuclear weapons in the South Atlantic region was also noted.

53. One of the outstanding characteristics of the situation of youth in Latin America that was stressed by most of the delegations was the high percentage of young people in the population of the region. Related considerations discussed included the possibility of young people's integration into society and of providing them with suitable social services, in addition to the development potential represented by such a high proportion of youth in Latin American society.

/54. The

54. The high proportion of young people in the total population also exacerbated a problem mentioned in several statements: the national identity of such age groups. It was noted that young people were exposed to mass communications media that transmitted one-way messages which stifled young people's creativity and presented a risk to the overall education of youth. It was also stressed that both those media and the prevailing type of consumption in some countries of the region were vehicles through which young people were influenced by models and patterns of the so-called developed countries, which had little to do with the cultural heritage of their own countries. Some delegations noted that providing space for youth's participation in national life could counteract such negative influences and offer youth paths that were more consistent with their own cultural values; delegates were also called upon to foster patriotism and community and regional solidarity.

55. In regard to the concept of youth itself, in relation to the characteristics of the Latin American region, it was pointed out that the developed countries mainly tended to consider the theme of youth in relation to the young people who were within the educational system; in contrast, the regional perspective made it necessary to give much greater importance to the problems of rural youth, of young women, of young people belonging to ethnic and cultural minority groups, etc. In that context, many delegations stressed the existing diversity and segmentation of different youth groups (such as rural youth vis-à-vis urban youth, middle-class youth vis-à-vis working-class youth, etc.) and the need to address the specific problems of each group. Extensive reference was also made to the need to consider the problems of rural youth -especially those stemming from migration to cities- and those of marginalized urban youth. One delegation noted, in that respect, that its country had established a preferential option for aiding the youth of the most impoverished strata.

56. The need for national youth policies and programmes of a global and comprehensive nature was repeatedly stressed and it was emphasized that youth policies could not be separated from policies related to children or families, since those elements were necessary for defining the nature of youth itself.

57. In that context, the need for co-ordination among the different sectoral activities that influence the situation of youth in each country was also stressed, and conditions prevailing in that respect in different nations were described. Some countries in the region had youth ministries or the like and others had national co-ordination bodies; in general, the delegations of those countries which had no such mechanisms indicated that there were plans to establish them in the near future.

58. The vast majority of references to youth policies were linked to the theme of employment and unemployment. It was generally agreed that youth -and particularly young women, according to some delegations- was the sector most affected by the problem of unemployment in Latin American societies. The problems involved in the insertion of young people into the labour market were affecting every sphere of young people's lives, including the formation of new families, the appearance of irregular behaviour, forced migration, a deficient educational level that would affect their entire subsequent occupational life, marginalization, etc. Those problems were exacerbated by the high percentage

/of educated

of educated young people who were unemployed; one delegation indicated that that fact would make corrective measures in that field increasingly urgent and give a growing political cast to demands. Many delegations stressed the action undertaken by their governments to improve prevailing conditions in that field and noted that there was full awareness of the seriousness of the problem. One delegation mentioned that its country had established new areas for developing jobs for youth, in addition to new development poles for the same purpose.

59. Several delegations, in discussing the problems of unemployment and marginalization of youth, mentioned the especially grave nature of such problems when they involved the migration of young people from rural areas to large urban centres where they believed they could find better job opportunities. In that respect, they commented on the effect of the lack of education and training of such young people in relation to their possibility of joining the labour force, as well as the privation they suffered. One delegation noted that in its country one of the objectives of education should be a revaluation of the status of farming, as agriculture was the country's principal resource. It also mentioned the positive results of volunteer services, which linked young people in urban centres with their contemporaries in rural areas.

60. The delegation of a developed member country of the Commission referred to immigration into its country, to the volume of such immigration and to the situations arising from such illegal entry, which affected broad youth sectors for whom social protection conditions were precarious. It pointed out that such conditions were currently being modified, as could be seen by certain educational programmes at the State level, including bilingual education.

61. Several themes in the field of education were touched upon by the delegations, including the progress achieved by some countries in keeping students in school, in free education, in building new schools, and in training and skill development, especially -in some countries- for young women. Nonetheless, many delegations mentioned both quantitative and qualitative deficiencies in education systems; disorientation among youth was also mentioned, together with school drop-out rates (frequently owing to the need to begin working at an early age), increases in university enrolment without equivalent insertion in the labour market, etc. Mention was also made of the problem of the brain drain which in some cases was encouraged by developed countries, and which had a negative effect on the development of the countries in the region. One delegation also stressed the need to establish a network of educational institutions in its country to provide young people with common experience and promote the historical and cultural values of the society in which they lived.

62. Another comment on the subject of education referred to the polarization of educational levels, which was expressed in some countries by the presence of considerable numbers of university students matched by a similar number of illiterates or people with very little schooling. The consequences of that situation, it was stated, could be seen in the lack of a cultural communication code among young people, in the loss of potential human resources for development and in the limited current and future participation of such young people.

/63. It

63. It was also noted that extending educational services to new strata of the population, in many cases, had not been achieved without sacrificing the quality of the education provided, particularly in the new services offered to the lowest-income groups, and that that had not only affected the necessary basic homogeneity of the population, but also the aspirations of those groups to social mobility and participation.

64. Several delegations noted the imperative need to put into practice information and training programmes providing guidance for young people when entering the job market.

65. It was stated that some countries had developed research on youth matters and had established centres that were conducting significant research on youth employment, education, marginalization and culture. Other delegations referred to the need to conduct that type of research and to train qualified personnel in that field.

66. Several delegations referred to the constructive use of leisure time by youth as an important element in this policy. In that respect, it was stated that recreational activities were an important part of children's and adolescents' leisure time and contributed to the social integration of youth. In that context, one delegation referred to the need to provide channels for making positive use of the forced leisure resulting from unemployment or reduction of the length of the school day. Mention was also made of the need to provide suitable guidance for the use of free time, in which the communications media should also co-operate, as well as to establish different kinds of centres, clubs, etc. for such purposes.

67. The problem of irregular conduct was also stressed on various occasions and it was noted that such behaviour reflected the problems and contradictions of the societies to which the young people belonged. One delegation mentioned the need to attack problems such as drug addiction, which, in addition to its psychological, social and biological effects, ultimately threatened the sovereignty of the country and undermined the future of the nation.

68. Several delegations expressed their concern for the health conditions of youth, and one of them noted that high priority should be given to a comprehensive programme of health education and preventive health care for adolescents and young people.

69. With respect to the formation of families, reference was made not only to the influence of deficient social conditions that made it difficult or impossible for young people to form families, but also to the problem of early and irresponsible maternity and paternity and to the need to provide social services for young mothers, with particular emphasis on day nurseries and mother-child health care programmes, to support their insertion in the labour force. The need to improve information and education regarding the constitution of families in order to remedy the situations caused by the high incidence of cohabitation by mutual consent and illegitimacy of the children of such unions was also mentioned. In that respect, one delegation also mentioned family planning programmes and another referred to the achievements by its country in the area of integrated family care and the strengthening of the family's role in society.

70. As regards International Youth Year itself, the delegations considered that it would play a catalytic role in national, regional and world-wide efforts, and expressed their support for the accomplishment of IYY activities. Some delegations considered that the efforts involved should be permanent and not limited to a specific period. A number of countries reported that they had established national bodies to co-ordinate those tasks that included a broad range of representatives of the diverse youth sectors. One delegation noted that the IYY should not be viewed as a year devoted to the subject of youth, but rather as a year for action by young people themselves, and also considered that activities should fundamentally be carried out at the national level, without prejudice to those carried out under the auspices of the United Nations.

71. With regard to international activities, delegates referred to the holding of the Ninth Pan-American Games and the establishment of the Latin American and Caribbean Youth Centre as an instrument to promote and give continuity to the Regional Plan of Action for Youth. One delegation called upon the young people of Latin America to prepare a study on the rights of youth, to be submitted to the United Nations in 1985.

72. Within the general discussions, UNESCO, UNICEF, ILO, FAO, WHO/PAHO, JUNAC, IICA, UNU, CLACJ, IACI and the Commonwealth Young Programme presented reports on their respective activities with regard to youth matters and the celebration of the International Youth Year. A written report on the same subject was received from United Nations Volunteers. The Declaration of San José, in which thirty-five non-governmental organizations represented at the First Latin American Forum on Youth Participation expressed their commitment to meeting the challenges set forth by ECLA in the documents prepared for the Regional Meeting and to co-ordinating their efforts in the region with a view to taking action within their sphere of competence to support IYY objectives, was also presented.*/

73. One delegation put on record its objections concerning a passage on page 16 of the English version of a document distributed by an observer country, entitled "The Role and Place of the Younger Generation in the USSR". Seventeen delegations expressed their opinions on that point; eight of them joined in the reservations expressed by the first and supported the idea that the passage be withdrawn. The Chair, considering that the document itself was not an official Meeting document and that the contents of the page in question referred to a matter not covered by the agenda, ruled that it would not be relevant to submit the matter to general discussion. The Chair, supported by seven delegations, proposed that delegations which so desired should circulate their own documents dealing with the subject during the conference. After informal consultations, the objecting delegations accepted an expanded version of the Chair's suggested compromise, namely that they be permitted to submit to the ECLA Secretariat rebuttals at a later date, and that those rebuttals would be distributed to member countries.

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*/ See annex 3 of this report.

III. ADOPTION OF THE REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR

74. Following the plenary meetings, a Working Group was formed to consider the Draft Regional Plan of Action for Latin America and the Caribbean for the International Youth Year. The Working Group analysed the draft exhaustively and prepared a version to be presented at the last plenary meeting.

75. When the Working Group had completed its work, the plenary meeting adopted by consensus the Regional Plan of Action for Latin America and the Caribbean for the International Youth Year, the text of which is being distributed together with this report.*/

76. The delegation of Spain expressed satisfaction at the agreement to hold a further regional conference in 1985 for the purpose of reviewing the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action, mentioned in paragraph 97 subparagraph (1) at the Regional Plan of Action for Latin America and the Caribbean for the International Youth Year and expressed Spain's interest in being the host country for that conference.

77. While joining in the consensus in a spirit of compromise, two delegations expressed reservations to paragraph 110.2 of the Plan of Action. Stressing the International Youth Year's declared emphasis on youth activities at the national and regional levels, both countries expressed opposition to the holding of either a world conference or a world forum of governments, NGOs and experts. They could however, support a meeting during the fortieth regular session of the General Assembly or the following session of the Economic and Social Council, recognizing as they did the international significance of IYY in 1985. Furthermore, they drew attention to paragraph 98 of the Plan of Action, which cautioned against additional financial expenditures, and they pointed out that the costs of any international conference or forum had not been studied, estimated or placed before the ECLA meeting.

78. During the discussion of the annexes of the Regional Plan of Action, two delegations expressed their reservations about the second sentence of paragraph 3, subparagraph 3, which they believed was not pertinent to, nor would it further the originally stated purposes of the International Youth Year.

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*/ Document E/CEPAL/SES.20/G.22.

/Annex 1

Annex 1

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Cecil Blake, Senior Programme Officer

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International Planned Parenthood Federation

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Adelina Zonta Sánchez

World Federation of Democratic Youth

Gerardo Contreras Alvarez

World Federation of Trade Unions

Rafael Hernández Ojeda

League of Red Cross Societies

Stefan Baumgartner

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Gerardo Quirós Cuadra

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Confederación Latinoamericana de Asociaciones Cristianas de Jóvenes

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World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts

Sarah Workman, Chairman Western Hemisphere

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Annex 2

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Working documents

Provisional agenda	E/CEPAL/Conf.75/L.1/Rev.1
Situation and prospects of youth in Latin America	E/CEPAL/Conf.75/L.2
Draft Regional Plan of Action for Latin America and the Caribbean for the International Youth Year	E/CEPAL/Conf.75/L.3

Reference documents prepared by international agencies

Document prepared by UNESCO:
UNESCO and Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean: an analysis of problems and aspirations

Document prepared by WHO/PAHO:
Salud y juventud

/Annex 3

Annex 3

DECLARATION BY THIRTY-FIVE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED AT THE LATIN AMERICAN FORUM ON YOUTH PARTICIPATION */

Declaration of San José

The thirty-five institutions represented at the First Latin American Forum on Youth Participation, aware of the responsibilities held by all non-governmental organizations regarding youth problems in Latin America, wish to express their views and commitment with respect to the challenges posed by the following documents prepared by ECLA for the Latin American Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Youth Year:

a) Situation and prospects of youth in Latin America, and
b) Draft Regional Plan of Action for Latin America and the Caribbean for the International Youth Year.

1. We believe that it is the responsibility of both government entities and non-governmental organizations to make every possible effort to implement programmes for the integrated and harmonious development of youth in the region;

2. We believe that our work will acquire a new dimension by receiving the backing and support of the governments of the Latin American countries, and

3. We feel that a historical opportunity has arrived to seek mechanisms and systems for a joint effort by the different non-governmental organizations.

We therefore request:

- support for international organizations, and particularly for ECLA, whose far-sighted approach gave rise to this initiative, as well as for the governments of the region, in carrying out the recommendations emerging from this Forum;

- the adoption by governments of the Draft Regional Plan of Action submitted by ECLA, with due consideration for the position taken by the Latin American Forum on Youth Participation in regard to the aforementioned Plan.

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*/ The Latin American Forum on Youth Participation met at San José, Costa Rica, from 30 September to 2 October 1983.

POSITION OF THE FORUM IN REGARD TO ECLA'S DRAFT REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YOUTH YEAR

The Latin American Forum on Youth Participation declares its decided support for and adherence to the Regional Plan of Action for Latin America and the Caribbean for the International Youth Year. At the same time, it considers it necessary to stress certain key elements of the Plan that are of fundamental importance to the attainment of the basic goals of the IYY in terms of the overall social reality of the region.

The need to define new alternative development styles

The first of these elements has to do with the imperative need, especially in the current crisis facing Latin America, for progress in the definition of new alternative development styles. The problem of new development styles was widely discussed during the last decade, when rapid economic growth and considerable social progress were still being registered, but were still accompanied by inequality, segmentation, human frustration and persistent poverty. That problem is now being seen in a new light, particularly from the viewpoint of young people. Today and in the near future, the ability to create new development styles which are centered on human needs, participatory and solidary, and to carry out the changes necessary for achieving them has become an inescapable demand.

The wide range of inequalities produced by previous models becomes intolerable in situations of extreme difficulty. In the immediate future, the problem will be evident in very definite areas, such as jobs, adequate pay, services and housing for millions of young people. This means that new models, new policies and new attitudes must be created. It would be a serious mistake to imagine that these could be dealt with by makeshift measures. This crisis, like all great crises, will give rise to new social structures, and these must necessarily provide answers to the great problems of the future.

Among the fundamental objectives that must be considered in formulating new alternative development styles for Latin America, the four basic social development objectives appearing in the draft Regional Plan of Action merit special emphasis owing to their significance for guiding youth policies. They are set forth as four postulates with their respective corollaries concerning youth:

1. To achieve societies in which the fruits of development are equitably shared. To that end, it is necessary to overcome the segmentation which, within each country, radically separates social groups -according to geographical areas, social strata, degrees of urbanization or other dividing lines- with regard to their possibilities of access to the fruits of development and to the satisfaction of needs. Since youth represents the part of society most open to change, it should foreshadow the future social and cultural forms.

2. To achieve societies that are highly dynamic in their rates of expansion, innovation and attainment of better living styles, which are able to satisfy the growing aspirations of the increasingly numerous generations of young people who will be entering the Latin American societies. To achieve this goal, the young generations must be trained so that they may attain the level required by the current state of scientific and technological development and by the complexity of social life, but at the same time the creative potential of youth must be fully utilized by giving young people the opportunity to assume responsibilities.

3. To achieve societies in which personal and social development is not measured only by the receipt of an equal portion of the product of the collective effort, but in which people may fulfill themselves in freedom and with full creative and intelligent participation in all aspects of social life, including decision-making. Such an exercise of participation must necessarily begin with youth.

4. To achieve societies which make maximum use, in their development, of the possibilities of co-operation between nations and of regional integration, which will strive to keep the peace and will avoid the wasting of resources involved in preparations for war. A form of development of the continent based on integration and peace assumes the elimination of injustices and oppressions which are among the causes of many warlike incidents, but also assumes the creation of a new awareness of values, a process in which youth is an essential element.

The Forum is fully agreed that this is the approach that should be taken today in preparing a strategy on youth, directed towards the long term, but rooted in the current problems of different categories of young people: directed, in a sense, towards forming the society of the future. Furthermore, it believes that all countries should establish joint policies for youth, adapted to the problems that must be solved. Changing the situation of youth necessarily implies putting into practice policies that affect many different aspects at the same time. Thus, for example, providing vocational training without creating jobs, rural modernization without taking measures to correct land distribution and ownership, or urbanization without education and health policies may exacerbate rather than solve problems.

Participation of young people

Another key element in achieving the goals sought lies in the participation of young people. Strong encouragement should be given to active youth participation at all levels of social life to enable the policies directed towards the young generation to achieve the objectives established. Such active youth participation should be fostered as an educational method and as a means of personal fulfilment and of achieving the renewal of society through the contribution of young people, without which the proposed changes will not attain the dynamic impact sought.

Young people themselves must be included in the actual preparation of the diagnostic study of youth and in the formulation and establishment of policies concerning them.

The organized participation of youth in their own spheres of life and activity must be stimulated and supported. This must be given particularly high priority in the case of members of rural, indigenous and marginal urban groups, especially women. Support and incentives for low-income urban groups are also of basic importance.

The fields of participation that should be fostered include:

i) local sports activities based on place of residence, study or work;
ii) union activities, with special attention to youth labour problems;
iii) ventures in democratic participation based on new forms of production associations such as self-management or joint management youth enterprises and co-operatives;
iv) social and cultural activities in the same spheres;
v) organized and non-organized student participation in educational and social activities at the secondary school level;
vi) participation of university students as members of student associations or other groups, in directing the universities themselves, in cultural extension activities and in the consideration of all the social problems of the country, and
vii) participation of youth in political parties, journalism and other spheres of national debate.

Annex 4

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUPS

To inform distinguished delegates to the meeting of the tasks carried out by the working groups, an outline of the most important aspects of the different themes analysed is presented below:

GROUP I

a) Youth, health and rehabilitation
b) Disadvantaged groups: rural and low-income urban youth

GROUP II

a) Formal and non-formal education and considerations regarding youth's access to jobs
b) Social and community participation of youth in the development process

GROUP III

Youth leadership training as a means of development: individual, institutional and civic.